

Tulare County
Workforce Investment Board

2023 Biennial Modification
to
Local Plan
Program Years 2021-2024

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I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Under the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and guidance published by the California Workforce Development Board and Employment Development Department, the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County (Tulare County WIB) developed a four-year Local Plan covering program years 2021-24. Upon approval by state officials representing the Governor, the plan became effective on July 1, 2021 and runs through June 30, 2025. As required by WIOA, Tulare County WIB has conducted a biennial review and update of the plan, which has led to the development of this 2023 modification. Following its approval by state representatives, the 2023 Biennial Modification will become the official version of the PY 21-24 Local Plan effective July 1, 2023.

Plan Development

On behalf of the board, the WIB's management team and staff led the process of developing the original PY 21-24 Local Plan. This process involved reviewing and evaluating existing partnerships, services, and systems and identifying areas that could be strengthened. The WIB, system partners, businesses, and community stakeholders were engaged in the planning process. Completion of the original plan took approximately six months, after which it was made available for public review and comment. A similar process was used to develop the biennial modification to the Local Plan.

The Planning Process in Context

In many ways, the process used to develop the original PY 21-24 Local Plan was typical and mirrored processes that the local board has used for developing workforce plans over the last four decades. In other ways, it was like no previous planning process. While the development of past plans has certainly been influenced by new legislation, changes in the economy, social issues, and other factors, never before has the Tulare County WIB developed a plan amid a global pandemic. In several ways, the adversity and challenges brought about by limitations resulting from COVID-19 fueled ingenuity. Some of the adaptations and innovations implemented in 2020 and 2021 continue to affect local workforce programs. Priority considerations which are expressed in the plan, focus, in part, on how these changes can and should be adopted as permanent strategies. *The 2023 modification provides an update to priorities expressed in the original PY 21-24 Local Plan and forecasts strategies for the remainder of the four-year planning period.*

Priorities and Vision for the Workforce System

During the development of the original PY 21-24 Local Plan, WIB representatives and stakeholders engaged in discussions about strengthening services and the board's "vision" for the local workforce system. Dozens of thoughtful, informed, and innovative ideas were shared during these discussions. Several overarching themes emerged from input provided by members of the Workforce Investment Board and stakeholders. These include the following recommendations for the local workforce development delivery

system, along with biennial modification updates, as noted:

1. Continue to identify the skills businesses need most, recognizing that the economic landscape may significantly change and evolve over the next four years and beyond.

These efforts are ongoing.

2. When business needs are identified, move rapidly to transform them into training and services, leveraging resources from industry, economic development, the workforce system, and, especially, local education partners.

These efforts are ongoing.

3. Focus on foundational skills such as communication and mathematics, digital literacy, financial literacy, and workplace behaviors and attitudes.

An “essential skills:” curriculum has been implemented.

4. Expand the system’s reach, making services available for all job seekers. These efforts should include strategies to increase the physical presence of stakeholders at sites throughout the county and the greater use of online platforms to provide information and deliver services.

Employment Connection Career Services and Youth Program providers are outreaching to and meeting with customers at locations near them throughout Tulare County. A comprehensive countywide outreach plan has been developed by each program provider. Staff maintains a regular schedule at partner sites and holds events throughout the community. Providers have assembled an extensive list of community sites where information and services are available.

The WIB is investing in a new Employment Connection website which will enable workforce programs to better reach customers virtually. The website will be based on customers’ needs and is being designed and developed based on customer-centered design strategies.

5. Connecting to other initiatives in the County, address the “digital divide,” which limits the access that low-income individuals and communities have to technology and web-based information and services.

These efforts are ongoing.

6. Be intentional about the WIB’s strategies to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion and communicate the WIB’s plans on these issues.

Employment Connection and WIB staff have participated in various training sessions focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion, along with related topics. These include:

Introduction to Cultural Intelligence

- Developing the Language of Cultural Intelligence
- Understanding Implicit Bias Through the Lens of Cultural Intelligence
- How to Create Sustainable Change
- Managing Conflict through the Lens of Equity
- Success for All Learners Through Equity

Various topics that support the workforce system's provision of effective services to persons with disabilities:

- Windmills
- Deaf Culture and Community
- Disability Awareness and Etiquette

Additional Priorities and Strategic Focus

Since the approval of Tulare County WIB's PY 21-24 Local Plan, the WIB has taken action to address the foregoing priorities. Among these actions are the establishment of measures referred to as "Objectives and Key Results" and participation in efforts to bring additional financial grant resources to the San Joaquin Valley and to Tulare County:

Objectives and Key Results

In March 2022, the WIB launched new performance measures to assess outcomes labeled Objectives and Key Results (OKRs). The WIB's OKRs blend WIOA performance indicators with locally developed measures to help WIB management and staff understand the impact of the workforce development program in Tulare County.

OKRs highlight the primary goals of the workforce development system and contracts. Tulare County WIB will pilot OKRs in PY 2022-2023 to track key state and local measures. "Objectives" identify the purpose, mission, or strategy and "key results" are measurement criteria. They help to align traditional measurements with aspirational goals.

OKRs focused on adult service delivery include:

- Support job seekers at all levels in building essential skills and experience needed to succeed in the workforce.
- Increase the technical skills of job seekers to help them access high quality jobs.
- Establish a talent pool of candidates who are well prepared and ready for work.
- Establish a system that prioritizes our customers' experience and needs.
- Provide Tulare County businesses with high quality candidates to meet their workforce needs.

OKRs focused on delivery of services to youth and young adults include:

- Support young adults and youth at all levels in building essential skills and experience needed to succeed in the workforce.
- Increase the technical skills of young adults and youth to help them access high-quality jobs.
- Establish a system that prioritizes our customers' experience and needs.
- Provide Tulare County businesses with high quality candidates to meet their workforce needs.

Recovery Strategies - Regional Grants

In the latter half of 2021 and over the course of 2022, five significant grant awards to the Central Valley have been announced. The WIB was actively engaged as a convening partner and representative voice during application planning discussions, which have resulted in millions of dollars being awarded to the Central Valley. For each grant, the WIB was asked to represent the interests of job seekers and businesses and help shape the goals of the grant funding being directed to Tulare County. As implementation phases of the grants are beginning, the WIB continues to be a part of the process to develop specific projects and initiatives that will bring regional funding to the County. These grants will have an enormous economic impact on Tulare County over the next two decades. Following is a summary of recent grant awards:

- Community Economic Resilience Fund (CERF): Fosters an inclusive, resilient, and sustainable economy that creates quality jobs and provides equitable economic access across the Central San Joaquin Valley.
- Build Back Better: Accelerates the integration of technology and skills in the Agriculture industry.
- K-16 Collaboration: Designs, creates, and scales intersegmental work to reimagine race equity, diversity, and inclusion in education and the workforce.
- Good Jobs Challenge: Bolsters and diversifies the economy by placing residents into high-quality jobs in four growth industries.
- Regional Equity and Recovery Partnerships (RERP): Ensures that the local economy expands and that historically marginalized populations have an opportunity to participate in the resulting prosperity by securing quality jobs within that expansion.

Renewed Stakeholder Engagement and Plan Recommendations

In developing the 2023 Modification to the PY 21-24 Local Plan, Tulare County WIB engaged workforce system stakeholders and community members in discussions about the workforce system. Recommendations arising from these discussions are described in Section 5.

Additional information on community and workforce system partner engagement used to support the update to the Local Plan is provided in Attachment I to the Plan.

II. WIOA CORE AND REQUIRED PARTNER COORDINATION

WIOA includes requirements for Local Boards to establish a framework for collaboration among state and local programs that are financially supported by nineteen distinct federal fund sources. Six of these programs constitute the four “core partners:” the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs; the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program; the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act Program; and the WIOA Title IV State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program. The core partners, together with thirteen other federally supported programs, make-up the WIOA-mandated one-stop partners. The Tulare County WIB has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the organizations managing each federal program at the local level. The narrative that follows describes coordination with WIOA core and other required program partners as prescribed by the Act.

Coordination with AJCC Partners and WIOA Memorandum of Understanding

Long before the passage of WIOA, the Tulare County WIB had developed strong relationships and guidelines for collaboration with most of the state and local agencies that today comprise the one-stop partners prescribed under federal regulations. Over the next four years, there will be many opportunities to strengthen the coordination and alignment of partner services. Some such opportunities are described in the narrative that follows, and others will be identified as the Tulare County workforce system partners continue to work together and collaborate in the months and years ahead.

Overview of Local One-Stop System Partners

Following is a summary of the local/regional organizations representing the nineteen (19) federal one-stop partner programs, with which the WIB had developed MOUs.

Federal Partner Programs	MOU Partner
Title I Adult Title I Dislocated Worker Title I Youth	Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County
Title II Adult Education and Literacy	Visalia Unified School District/Visalia Adult School Tulare Joint High School District/Tulare Adult School Porterville Unified School District/Porterville Adult School Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District/Cutler-Orosi Adult School Proteus, Inc.
Title III Wagner-Peyser	Employment Development Department (EDD)
Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation	California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Community Services and Employment Training (CSET) SER-Jobs for Progress
Carl Perkins Career, Technical Education	Kern Community College District/Porterville College College of the Sequoias

Community Services Block Grant	Community Services and Employment Training Proteus, Inc.
HUD Employment and Training	<i>No federally funded programs in Tulare County</i>
Job Corps	San Jose Job Corps Center
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	Employment Development Department
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (WIOA Section 167)	Proteus, Inc.
Native American Programs (WIOA Section 166)	Tule River Indian Tribe of California
Second Chance	<i>No federally funded programs in Tulare County</i>
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/CalWORKs	Tulare County Health and Human Services (HHSA)
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Employment Development Department
Unemployment Insurance (UI)	Employment Development Department
Youth Build	<i>No federally funded programs in Tulare County</i>

Tulare County WIB has also entered into MOUs with the following public and community partners:

- Porterville Sheltered Workshop (PSW)
- Sequoias Adult Education Consortium (SAEC)
- Ticket to Work, Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE)
- EDD Labor Market Information Division (LMID)

Memorandum of Understanding with System Partners

Tulare County WIB had developed an MOU with all federally funded system partners. The core content of the MOU addresses shared customers, shared services, and shared costs. Tulare County also highlights local workforce system service priorities, which include:

Integrated Service Delivery: A seamless system is presented to the customer.

Customer-Focus: All aspects of service delivery are designed with consideration of customers’ needs and interests.

Customer Choice: The system provides a wide array of useful information to assist customers in making informed choices.

Customer Access: The system is designed for universal access, with “no wrong door” to access integrated services.

Community Support: The system promotes and nurtures broad-based community support.

Performance: The system establishes identified outcomes and methods for measuring achievement.

Coordination with AJCC Partner Programs

The following information summarizes how the WIB and the local workforce system collaborate with organizations managing the federally mandated one-stop partner programs.

WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs: The three formula-funded programs are administered by the WIB, and Adult and Dislocated Worker program services are delivered through the AJCCs by contracted career services providers: CSET in Visalia, Porterville, and Tulare and Proteus, Inc. in Dinuba. Youth program services are delivered by designated providers in the following areas:

- Area I – Porterville and surrounding areas (TCOE – SEE)
- Area II – Tulare and surrounding areas (CSET)
- Area III – Visalia and surrounding areas (CSET)
- Area IV – Cutler-Orosi/Dinuba and surrounding areas (CSET)
- Area V – Farmersville/Exeter and surrounding areas (Proteus, Inc.)

WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Literacy: The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), Title II of WIOA, is the principal source of federal funding to states for adult education programs. The program focuses on helping adults to increase their basic education skills; gain support in attaining a secondary school diploma or prepare for an equivalency exam; and, for English language learners, improving reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills in English. The Tulare County education agencies that are WIOA Title II grantees are members of the Sequoias Adult Education Consortium and Kern Adult Education Consortium. The WIB and local career service providers are consortium partners. Coordination comes in the form of cross-referrals between workforce and education partners, with Title II grantees serving as the primary resource for remedial and basic education and related programs.

WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser: Among all the federal programs with which the WIB collaborates, linkages with Wagner-Peyser have historically been the strongest, as the staff from WIOA and Wagner-Peyser programs have been fully integrated around key functions of the AJCCs. Even with service integration, Wagner-Peyser representatives maintain responsibility for specific services such as coordination of TAA activities and operation of EDD's Youth Employment Opportunity Program. Enhancements to coordination that have been identified as goals for the four-year period covered by the Local Plan include greater collaboration during enrollment and additional cross-training for WIOA and partner staff on all EDD programs and services, including Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Outreach and California Training Benefits. During the development of the Biennial Modification to the PY 21-24 Local Plan, it was noted that only a portion of EDD staff has returned to work on-site at the Employment Connection centers and that

this was affecting the integrated service delivery model that has long been in place in Tulare County.

WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation: DOR has staff co-located at the comprehensive AJCCs in Visalia and Porterville. Co-location fosters improved communication and coordination of services. The WIB has two programs with shared consumers between DOR and the WIOA Title I Adult and Youth Programs: Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS), which serves youth and provides students with disabilities job readiness training and work experience in a career pathway matching their interests and career goals; and the Disability Employment Accelerator (DEA) program, which focuses on providing competitive integrated employment positions for adults. DOR provides a wide range of services for the local workforce system, ranging from interpretation services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals to training for the partners on effectively serving individuals with disabilities. Discussions between WIB and DOR representatives have led to the identification of several areas where improved coordination can be achieved. These include DOR’s assistance in working with businesses on the placement of persons with disabilities; improved tracking of referrals and results; and increasing co-enrollments to better leverage resources.

Carl Perkins Career Technical Education: Coordination with Carl Perkins-funded career and technical education (CTE) programs is facilitated by the Tulare Kings College and Career Collaborative (TKCCC), in which all public education agencies serving adults participate. Perkins programs are present at the two community colleges in Tulare County (College of the Sequoias and Porterville College) and offer numerous vocational skills training programs, many of which are within fields of study linked to local and regional priority sectors. Coordination is primarily achieved through referrals of job seekers/students between the AJCCs and the colleges’ CTE staff. Also, the WIB facilitates an Industry Engagement Workgroup for the TKCCC partnership. The WIB also provides opportunities for education partners to promote their programs and services to AJCC customers through a weekly virtual “Training Connect” program.

In 2021, four regional advisory boards were launched to connect the workforce, postsecondary, and K-12 partners to industry in a more coordinated way. The WIB will also continue to provide ongoing support for Sector Summit Events, which are used to connect education and workforce partners to the needs of industry and improve CTE pathways. The WIB provides informational presentations that are targeted to faculty and staff of education partners, explaining services and programs offered at the AJCCs.

Title V Older Americans Act: In Tulare County, coordination with the Senior Community Service Employment Program is, generally, seamless, as the career services provider for both of the comprehensive AJCCs and one satellite center, CSET, also administers a SCSEP program. The program is promoted to individuals 55 years and older through the AJCCs and the entire network of providers. CSET has provided cross-training about the program to system partners. This training covered eligibility requirements, program activities, and program outcomes. Since the implementation of the PY 21-24 Local Plan,

SER Jobs for Progress has also implemented a SCSEP program serving Tulare County and has staff co-located at the Employment Connection center in Visalia.

Native American Programs (WIOA Section 166): The Tule River Tribal Council is the WIOA Section 166 grantee in Tulare County. The tribe's workforce development programs offer many of the same services as the WIB's AJCCs, with primary differences being scale, as the AJCCs are much larger, and offer connections to the full range of system partners. To make information about the local system more convenient and accessible for individuals served by the Tribal Council, the WIB will utilize digital platforms to provide more information, workshops, and services online. The WIB will provide online access to its "Training Connect" videos, virtual recruitment events, and online job listings, along with information on and registration links to AJCC workshops. By making a greater number of services easily accessible to Tule River participants, an increase in co-enrollment is likely.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (WIOA Section 167): The WIB has long had strong ties with Proteus, Inc., the local Section 167 grantee. Proteus operates the AJCC Affiliate site in Dinuba, where all customers receive a "central intake" to determine eligibility and appropriateness for various programs to maximize and leverage funds. Through co-enrollment in Section 167, WIOA Title I, and other system programs, Proteus offers migrant and seasonal farmworker customers basic career services, vocational training, work-based learning, work readiness training, ESL, GED services, and supportive services.

Veterans: Coordination with the Jobs for Veterans State Grant programs is achieved by co-location of EDD Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) staff at the AJCCs. Center staff and partners serving job seekers from community locations have been oriented to veterans' services and supports that are provided by these staff. DVOP specialists provide intensive services to veterans and eligible spouses that are designed to facilitate participants' transition into meaningful civilian employment. LVER staff performs outreach to local businesses and employers to advocate for the hiring of veterans.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Act: TAA is a federal program that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. The TAA program offers a variety of benefits and reemployment services to help unemployed workers prepare for and obtain suitable employment. Workers may be eligible for training, job search, and other reemployment services. Coordination with TAA generally includes co-enrollment into WIOA, which provides multiple benefits, including TAA funds being used to cover all training costs. AJCC staff and system partners have been oriented to eligibility requirements, program benefits, and referral procedures to EDD representatives.

Community Services Block Grants (CSBG): As is the case with other programs, coordination with CSBG is facilitated by the fact that CSET, the primary career services provider for the local AJCC network, receives CSBG funds. CSET's CSBG program

supports the agency's ability to develop and offer services in the areas of employment, education, asset building, housing, nutrition, civic engagement, emergency services, and disaster relief. It supports coordination of services across the agency's four departments (Community Initiatives, Energy Services, Sequoia Community Corps, and Workforce Development), facilitating a "no wrong door" approach to customer service. CSBG also supports agency capacity building, strategic planning, and participation in county-wide collaborations that create solutions to the challenges facing Tulare County's low-income residents. Proteus, Inc. uses CSBG grant funds to provide migrant and seasonal farmworkers with emergency support services, such as rental, utility, transportation/gas assistance; citizenship/DACA application fees; work supplies; food; and other services that meet the specific needs of individuals and families. The funds are also used to support classes for underserved communities that focus on citizenship, ESL, Adult Basic Education, and preparing for High School Equivalency exams.

Unemployment Compensation: In the past, coordination with EDD's Unemployment Insurance program was achieved through an onsite liaison function provided by EDD staff. A UI Navigator provided support to AJCC customers on a walk-in basis. UI services are now provided primarily online. UI staff also provides RESEA/PJSA workshops via the web. Employment Connections has implemented a referral system that connects customers to UI staff.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/CalWORKs: Coordination and cross-referrals between the AJCCs and the various TANF-supported programs administered by the Tulare County Health and Human Service Agency (HHSA) have been successful over many years. Welfare-to-Work and Expanded Subsidized Employment staff are co-located at the Visalia and Porterville comprehensive Employment Connection centers and Dinuba and Tulare affiliate Employment Connection centers. CalWORKs recipients may be co-enrolled in WIOA and partner programs. Section III.A of this Plan describes coordination specific to the CalFresh Employment and Training Program.

Partners' Efforts to Collaborate on Co-Enrollment and Case Management

WIOA emphasizes coordination among partner programs, including the use of resources from two or more programs to address the needs of individuals enrolled in WIOA and other publicly funded programs. To access a broad range of resources, individuals eligible across various fund streams may be co-enrolled in multiple programs. Tulare County WIB and system partners understand the value of strategic co-enrollment of workforce system customers in more than one program when distinct resources are required to address the full range of services and support needed by a job seeker to meet his/her goals. In pursuing co-enrollment, system staff is careful to avoid duplication of services across fund streams, ensuring that each program into which an individual is enrolled provides unique services.

Co-Enrollment Initiatives and Strategies

Tulare County has implemented several initiatives and strategies to support strategic co-

enrollment of job seekers with core, one-stop, and broader system partners. These include:

Coordinated Eligibility and Intake: A “Partner Guide” was developed so that staff at each partner agency could easily identify when a participant may be eligible for and able to benefit from more than one program. Staff representing all partners have been oriented to the guide and the various resources it describes. The guide serves as a catalog of the one-stop partners, services, and eligibility requirements.

System Coordination via The One-Stop Operator Function: The AJCC Operator/OSO function is responsible for on-going training, supporting communication within and among sites, delivering staff training across all agencies, and promoting consistent, coordinated, and quality service. In its Operator role, the WIB ensures that the partners convene regularly. AJCC staff meet monthly (Employment Connection Site Meetings) and the system partners meet quarterly (Employment Connection Committee). The meetings, along with day-to-day communications, provide a platform for discussing shared customers, co-enrollment, and coordinated case management. In addition, onboarding training, which provides an overview of the local workforce development system, is offered monthly.

Coordination of Referrals: The system partners have developed a streamlined referral process with the implementation of a common referral form. An electronic version had been implemented. A structured and effective system to refer customers between providers is foundational to successful co-enrollment.

Clearly Defined Responsibilities: Each partner is responsible for making appropriate referrals, providing sufficient documentation for the participant files, and tracking referrals. Referrals, and resulting co-enrollment outcomes, are reported to the OSO monthly.

Cross-Training: The WIB’s and the local workforce system’s commitment to cross-training helps support common case management. The WIB leads system-wide cross-training efforts. Each one-stop partner developed a slide deck providing an overview of its services, resources, and program eligibility requirements. The presentations are cataloged and remain available for refreshers and onboarding of new staff.

Shared Case Management

Within the integrated model to service delivery that the WIB adopted more than a decade ago, teams comprised of staff representing various organizations, programs, and fund streams work together to customize services for individuals. In addition to WIOA Title I programs, programs represented by the integrated services teams include, but are not limited to Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (WIOA Title II), Disability Employment Accelerator, STEPs, English Language Learner, Prison to Employment, Readiness for Employment through Sustainable Education & Traing, Expanded Subsidized Employment, and Trade Adjustment Assistance. As a result of staff efforts to tailor services to individuals’ needs, many participants receive services from more than one

program. Members of the integrated services teams communicate about service strategies and coordinated case management for co-enrolled customers. Staff schedules regular meetings to discuss strategies, services, and outcomes. Through the use of CalJOBS, WIOA staff documents the progress of co-enrolled individuals.

Since the Local Plan was published, the WIB has utilized a state Workforce Accelerator Funding (WAF) grant, matched by local funds, to implement the Bridges to Employment Connection (BEC) project in Porterville. BEC provides employment services to individuals experiencing homelessness, bringing together resources and knowledge of mission-driven community organizations and the City of Porterville. This project connects workforce programs with homeless services to help individuals obtain quality jobs and stable housing.

One-Stop System's Use of Technology and Other Remote Strategies

Tulare County is home to cities, towns, and rural communities. While well over half of the county's more than 450,000 residents reside in the three largest cities, a significant portion of the population is based in very small towns and remote locations across Tulare County's 4,800 square miles. The WIB ensures that workforce system services are available to all county residents and businesses, no matter their location.

Services to Remote Locations

The WIB strategically provides access to services for Tulare County residents through four AJCCs which are located in Visalia, Porterville, Dinuba, and Tulare, thereby covering a fairly large portion of the county. The centers all have ample parking and access to bus stops within walking distance, making them accessible for individuals traveling from any part of the county to receive services. However, the WIB's objective is that individuals in remote locations should be able to access services without having to travel long distances from their communities. Remote towns and communities of the county include Allensworth, Alpaugh, Cutler, Ducor, Earlimart, Exeter, Farmersville, Goshen, Ivanhoe, Lemon Cove, Lindsay, London, Orosi, Pixley, Richgrove, Springville, Strathmore, Sultana, Terra Bella, Three Rivers, Tipton, Traver, Woodlake, and Yettlem.

Some of the workforce system's strategies for getting services to remote communities include:

Outreach from Base Locations: From the four AJCCs, staff devise and implement outreach strategies to inform individuals and businesses in remote communities about WIOA and other system services. These efforts include establishing and maintaining relationships with organizations in the targeted communities, including public agencies, community organizations, churches and faith-based agencies, and local businesses. Experience has shown that local organizations and sites that are familiar to the community are effective in promoting workforce services. Making flyers, posters, and other printed materials available at these locations helps to build name recognition and familiarity with workforce programs. CSET is the career services provider at Visalia,

Porterville, and Tulare one-stop centers and is also the Community Action Agency for Tulare County. Given the AJCC sites it manages, along with its other work, CSET targets remote communities including Pixley, Earlimart, Cutler, Exeter, Farmersville, Woodlake, Goshen, and Lindsay. Proteus, which is the Career Services Provider at the Dinuba Center and has offices throughout Tulare County, including sites in remote communities, such as London.

Mobile “Pop-Up” One-Stops: Staff will regularly travel to remote communities to meet with interested individuals and customers. Pop-up meeting locations are set-up at partner facilities and other public sites, such as libraries to make services locally available. Proteus has a mobile unit that enables the organization to bring services to remote communities.

Technology Support for Remote Access

Over the last several years, WIB strategies for reaching people in remote communities have increasingly been built around the use of technology that connects people to the internet. However, such strategies are still evolving as many individuals do not always have access to technology. Three issues exist that the WIB is working with system stakeholders and others to address: broadband access; availability of hardware; and residents’ digital literacy skills. Progress is occurring in all three areas but is slower than ideal. The WIB and our education partners are ramping up digital literacy training, especially for those requiring basic technology skills that will enable them to effectively use web-based services. There has also been an increase in the use of support services to put technology in the hands of customers, such as the purchase of Chromebooks and other hardware for those participating in online training.

With the onset of the pandemic, the WIB and partners began to accelerate efforts to make services available through virtual/online formats. Now, customers in remote locations can access career services, program eligibility, work readiness workshops, and more. Online services that are now routinely used include Zoom, Google Hangouts, Facebook, Docu-sign.

Coordination of Workforce Activities and Support Services

For many WIOA participants, engagement in training, career exploration, job search, and other program activities would not be possible without financial and other forms of support. By definition, support services are resources that enable participation in workforce development services. Therefore, Tulare County WIB, subcontractors, and partners delivering services through the AJCC make every effort to ensure that the individual needs of each participant are identified and that appropriate resources are deployed to address these needs.

Determining Participants’ Needs for Support Services

During an initial assessment, AJCC staff orients applicants to the full range of services

available to individuals enrolled in WIOA, including supportive services. Determination of the need for supportive services may be based on several factors, including an individual's employment and career goals, training, and career development activities a participant has selected, and barriers to participation. Following an initial needs assessment, staff continues to evaluate each participant's need for support. The staff assesses needs at different phases of participation to ensure that unique needs are addressed as they arise.

Leveraging and Deploying Support Services Resources

WIOA participants have access to a wide range of supportive services to assist them during their participation in WIOA program services. Among these are assistance with: transportation (e.g., bus passes, mileage reimbursement, other transportation services necessary for training or employment interviews), childcare, health services, legal assistance, housing, interview attire, work clothes, work tools, tests, and other services necessary for individuals to obtain/retain employment or participate in career and training services.

Support services can be funded from several sources, including the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Programs into which participants are enrolled. In addition, Tulare County WIB is frequently awarded funds under special grant programs from state and local funding sources, such as the City of Visalia homeless project, which provides supportive services similar to WIOA. Tulare County HHS provides a wide range of supportive services to individuals receiving cash assistance. These services include transportation assistance, childcare, interview attire, work clothes, and other items necessary to obtain and retain employment or complete a training program. Tulare County's community action agency, CSET, also provides a wide range of support through various funding resources. These include programs to provide individuals with energy assistance, rent or mortgage assistance, and income tax preparation services, among others. The City of Porterville provides supportive services as part of the Bridges to Employment Connections program.

Staff members providing direct services to job seekers are familiar with community resources to address supportive service needs. Case managers make certain that, when referring a customer to a third party for support, they provide a warm hand-off. Staff makes referrals to public and community-based agencies by making direct contact and arranging for AJCC customers to meet with specific partner staff that will assist them with support services. Case managers record support services needs, resources identified to meet these, and referrals to providers.

The pandemic has highlighted for workforce system staff the ever-changing and evolving needs of participants for support, which may currently include technology-related items to enable individuals to participate in online services. The WIB will continue to evaluate trends and make the identification of resources to increase access to support a priority for the workforce system.

Tulare County WIB had long made accessibility for persons with disabilities a priority for the AJCCs and the local workforce system. The WIB's use of a four-part approach to ensure that our services meet all accessibility requirements as well as qualitative priorities that we have established for serving individuals with disabilities and customers representing other vulnerable populations. The WIB's approach includes:

1. Ensuring that management and staff have a clear and comprehensive understanding of federal and state regulations and requirements about accessibility and provision of services for persons with disabilities.
2. Development and implementation of local policies on accessibility, non-discrimination, and equal opportunity (EO) requirements and goals.
3. Implementation of services and resources to meet the needs of this target population.
4. Making certain that WIB and AJCC staff, along with system partners, are informed and trained in best practices for serving and meeting the employment needs of persons with disabilities.

WIB Policies and Monitoring Protocols

The WIB's detailed procedures (*TUL17-05 Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures*) cover a full range of critical topics, such as accessibility requirements; reasonable accommodation and reasonable modifications for individuals with disabilities; use of service animals; and mobility aids and devices. The WIB incorporates requirements into our subrecipient agreements. In addition, EO posters in English and Spanish informing customers of their rights are located in all facilities. Registered customers sign a document indicating that they have been informed of their equal opportunity rights and responsibilities and how the discrimination complaint process works.

The WIB has developed detailed guidelines (*TUL17-08 Oversight and Monitoring for Nondiscrimination and EO Procedures*) for oversight and monitoring of contractors to ensure compliance with the requirements of applicable federal disability nondiscrimination law, including Section 504, Title II of the ADA of 1990, as amended, and WIOA Section 188, concerning individuals with disabilities. It includes a Reasonable Accommodation Policy and Procedure Guide. The WIB reviews with subrecipients an EO monitoring tool that is based on the State's tools for assessing compliance with WIOA Section 188 Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity. WIB staff annually conducts on-site visits to all subrecipients to assess EO compliance.

Technology Resources for Persons with Disabilities

WIB and AJCC leadership and staff continuously evaluate AJCC facilities and resources to identify opportunities to further enhance accessibility for customers with disabilities. Among the technology resources and other forms of support that have been implemented at one or more of the AJCCs are:

- UbiDUO, which provides communication assistance for individuals with hearing impairments.
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Interpreting Service
- TTY Telephone Relay
- LCD Magnifier
- JAWS (Job Access with Speech)
- Zoom text (magnifier/reader)
- Dragon Naturally Speaking

Information and Training for Staff and System Partners

DOR is a co-located partner within the local one-stop system and has served as a valuable resource for assisting all AJCC staff in understanding the unique needs of individuals with disabilities and best practices for service delivery. DOR representatives have provided “Windmills” training for center staff. This high-impact attitudinal training program focuses on the unique employment needs of individuals with disabilities. Training will be ongoing to ensure that all staff has up-to-date knowledge and that new staff is well informed about services for customers with disabilities.

III. STATE STRATEGIC PARTNER COORDINATION

In 2018, the State published a biennial modification to California's Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan for Program Years 2016-19. Within this modification, the California Workforce Development Board identified several new strategic partnerships with state-level agencies and initiatives. Guidance issued by the State Board in 2018 to Local Boards regarding two-year modifications to their PY 17-20 Plans required that WDBs pursue these partnerships within their jurisdictions. In our 2019 modification to the Local Plan, Tulare County WIB described these local-level relationships, some of which were in the early stages of development. Following is a summary of the evolution of these strategic partnerships as well as approaches under consideration to further strengthen collaboration with local providers and programs.

Coordination with County Human Services Agency and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals That Access CalFresh Employment and Training Services

The development of Tulare County WIB's two-year modification to our PY 2017-2020 Local Plan coincided with the implementation of a CalFresh Employment and Training (E&T) pilot program in the county. The WIB, AJCCs, and the overall workforce system have been connected to the program since its inception.

Workforce System Linkages to CalFresh Employment and Training

CalFresh E&T is administered by the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA). In early 2019, HHSA entered into an agreement with CSET (which serves as the career service provider for three local AJCCs) to pilot a third-party CalFresh E&T program targeted to the General Assistance population. Participation is voluntary. The initial phase of the pilot has been completed. While HHSA originally planned to refer 150 individuals to the program, COVID affected these plans, and far fewer were served.

CalFresh Employment and Training Program Design

The CalFresh E&T model developed by CSET offers two distinct approaches for participants: job search and work-based learning.

Job Search: Under this model, participants attend workshops where, in addition to learning about job search strategies, they have access to an array of current job leads. Workshops emphasize soft skills and prepare participants to not only perform well in interviews but to succeed within work environments.

Work-Based Training: This model uses on-the-job training (OJT) as a method to offer participants both training and exposure to the world of work. After staff assesses and identifies training needs, they work with participants to pinpoint work-based learning activities that hold promise for imparting the skills most needed by participants.

Under the CalFresh E&T program model, the above strategies may be linked to training by Sequoia Community Corps, which offers work-based and hybrid programs in various trades, including construction, solar, weatherization, urban forestry, recycling, electronic waste collection, oil collection, and recycling education.

Opportunities for Continued Collaboration

Coming out of the pandemic the partners recognize that fully launching the pilot as it was envisioned will be achievable. Conversations were held with management of HSA, CSET the career services provider for the CalFRESH E&T program during the modification of the PY21-24 Local Plan. As the pilot develops traction, a new eligibility system is rolled out, and all partners continue to increase capacity, the partners foresee more cross referrals and greater numbers of individuals enrolled in the CalFresh E&T pilot program.

Coordination with Local Child Support Agency and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals Who Are Non-Custodial Parents

Discussions between the WIB and representatives and the Tulare County Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) took place in 2018 to support the development of the WIB's biennial plan modification built upon an existing, long-standing relationship between the two organizations. In the past, DCSS referred non-custodial parents (NCPs) on its caseload to the workforce system for assistance with job search and employment. While some successes were achieved, those being referred often did not take full advantage of WIB services for a variety of reasons, including distrust of public agencies and concerns about engaging in employment from which wages could be garnished.

Initial Plans for Structured Coordination

During the 2018 discussions, the WIB and DCSS began to consider approaches being implemented throughout California that focused on promoting a more positive image of child support agencies and using this positive image to connect those with enforcement orders to the workforce system. The discussions centered on the greater application of "motivation tools" that Tulare County DCSS could utilize to encourage NCPs to take advantage of workforce programs and services. Among these are the restoration of licenses; revisiting support orders to ensure they reflect the current circumstances of the NCP; and deferring or lessening requirements for payment during the time in which NCPs are engaged in workforce services, training, and job search. The WIB, Child Support Services, and other stakeholders agreed that the best tool to motivate and support NCPs' engagement with the workforce system is providing good and accurate information about child support obligations; payment options; labor market and employment opportunities; and services that can lead to well-paying jobs with career ladder potential. Early discussions also highlighted the importance of making a warm hand-off between the two systems.

Moving Forward with Collaboration

In 2019 and 2020, some progress was made with regard to increasing the number of referrals from DCSS to the AJCCs. DCSS and the WIB collaborated on the development of a referral process. However, the effects of the pandemic stalled progress. During the development of the 2023 Biennial Modification to the PY 21-24 Local Plan, conversations were held with management and staff of DCSS, along with a Commissioner and representative of the Family Court system of Tulare County. Based on these discussions, it was agreed that the partners would continue to examine opportunities to collaborate including connecting workforce services directly to actions taken by the court. Also discussed were the possibility of developing a pilot program to test strategies, and the benefits that grant funding would provide to collaboration efforts.

Coordination with Local Partnership Agreement Partners Established in Alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities.

In 2018, during the process of updating and modifying our PY 2017-20 Local Plan, the Tulare County WIB convened stakeholders from the disability services community and other interested parties in a forum focused on the use of competitive integrated employment (CIE), development of a local partnership agreement (LPA) among the state-mandated core partners, and opportunities for other organizations in the local workforce system to collaborate with the LPA partners. Through this community and stakeholder engagement process, the WIB and other stakeholders learned that the core partners (special education, the regional center, and DOR) had drafted an LPA and it was going through an initial review process. By May 2020, all parties had signed off on and executed the agreement, The Tulare-Kings LPA, represents the following core partners:

Local Education Agency Partners: Delano Joint Union High School District, Exeter Unified School District, Kings County Office of Education, Porterville Unified School District, Tulare County Office of Education, Tulare Joint Union High School District, Visalia Unified School District, Woodlake Unified School District;

Department of Rehabilitation: Visalia Branch Office; and

Regional Center: Central Valley Regional Center.

The development of the local LPA has had several positive effects for the WIB and the full range of workforce system partners. During the WIB's initial convening on this matter in November 2018, the partners recognized that greater collaboration could be achieved between the traditional disability services network, consisting of CIE core partners and other local organizations primarily focused on persons with disabilities, and the workforce development system partners. As a result of these discussions, a local LPA group was formed (even before the execution of the agreement), which included both the core partners and several community partners, such as the WIB and our career services

providers. The group's primary focus is on improving post-secondary outcomes for youth with disabilities. Convenings of the core and community partners have provided a forum for partners to learn about services all agencies provide for individuals with disabilities. Meetings also allow for an exchange of information and announcements of upcoming events.

Virtual meetings of the LPA group continued to take place during the pandemic. In late 2020, the WIB made a presentation to the group on the following two programs that it administers, which serve individuals with disabilities: Access to Careers and Employment (ACE) and Summer Training and Employment Program for Students with Disabilities (STEPS). The ACE program, which is funded under a State Disability Employment Accelerator (DEA) grant, creates linkages and engages businesses to develop earn and learn strategies that lead to competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities. The project serves individuals with disabilities ages 18 and above who are eligible under the WIOA Adult program. The primary focus of STEPS is workplace readiness and work experience. STEPS serves youth ages 16-21 who are enrolled in secondary, post-secondary, or adult education and have a 504 or IEP plan. DOR approves referrals and enrollments, and participants are co-enrolled into the WIOA Youth program.

Collaboration with the LPA partners has not only increased the workforce system partners' awareness of CIE and the unique employment needs of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities but has brought a stronger overall disability focus to the local workforce system. The WIB and system stakeholders will continue to improve collaboration with the LPA partners and other organizations within the local disability services network to ensure that services for individuals with disabilities are widely available and highly effective.

Coordination with Community-Based Organizations and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals Who are English Language Learners, Foreign Born, and/or Refugees

Approximately two-thirds of Tulare County residents are Latino and among this population there is a significant number of immigrants. Serving individuals who are developing English language skills is a regular part of the WIB's workforce services operations. Linkages with education and community partners are critical to the WIB's success in meeting the needs of English language learners (ELLs), foreign-born individuals, and refugees.

Network of Providers Serving the Target Population

Two core relationships are fundamental to the WIB's success in serving ELLs and other immigrants. The career services providers for Tulare County's network of AJCCs are CSET and Proteus (which is the local WIOA Section 167 Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program grantee), both of which have decades of experience serving this target population throughout the County. The two organizations provide an extensive

range of services to reduce poverty, develop skills, and strengthen individuals' and families' ability to achieve self-sufficiency. Through the implementation of a specialized English Language Learner grant (described below), the WIB and the AJCCs strengthened existing relationships with a variety of education providers and programs. Among these partners are several WIOA Title II grantees, including Sequoias Adult Education Consortium (SAEC), Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District (COJUSD), and Tulare Joint Union High School District (TJUHSD). Program Coordinators for the ELL grant project were co-located at the COJUSD Family Education Center, as well as at the Tulare Adult School campus, to facilitate the co-enrollment of ELLs in WIOA Title I Adult program services. The Coordinator and designated Title II staff worked together to support participants and provide them with the resources to succeed in the achievement of their education and employment goals. The SAEC Navigator, worked closely with ELL Coordinators to recruit targeted individuals for the program, facilitate co-enrollment in WIOA Titles I and II, and provide referrals to address their individual needs. The ELL grant on which these partners collaborated provides a model for future immigrant-focused initiatives in Tulare County. Workforce system partners throughout Tulare County continue to secure grant funds to support the provision of services to this key target population.

Other essential partners in serving ELLs include EDD, which has staff dedicated to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker outreach. The WIB is committed to sustaining and developing relationships with all ELL partners. Continued collaboration will enable the workforce system to effectively serve the ELL population, leverage resources to meet their needs, and expand the network of organizations serving this key target group.

Coordination of Services

Frequent and regular communication among agencies serving ELLs and immigrants is crucial to the coordination of services. AJCC staff attends various local and regional meetings where many CBOs and their partners convene to share information about resources and services available to this target group. Gatherings include monthly C.O.N.N.E.C.T. sessions and meetings of the South Valley Collaborative, which includes participation by organizations providing diverse services, such as healthcare, parenting classes, and employment preparation activities, among others.

The WIB has collected and summarized the resources of an extensive network of partners, including those serving foreign-born individuals, within the Employment Connection Partner Guide. This guide was developed to support a seamless referral process among partners and system stakeholders and has been of great value in providing access to services for the ELL population.

As with partners serving all target populations, the WIB will look for opportunities for AJCC staff to co-locate at ELL-serving organizations. This is a high priority for agencies with locations in remote/rural communities in Tulare County. The co-location of staff creates a mechanism to provide ELL customers greater access to information regarding system-wide services such as English instruction and other educational programs, employment

services, and support resources. Furthermore, the WIB seeks to expand on the one-stop concept by creating more community access points in areas where immigrants live, such as CSET's Family Resource Center located in the rural communities of Earlimart and Pixley, where services are co-located with a healthcare clinic.

It should be noted that immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries are not the only foreign-born individuals in Tulare County. The workforce system stakeholders are committed to supporting all immigrant groups in meeting their employment and career development goals. The stakeholders have connections to a wide range of resources that enable local workforce programs to access language and cultural liaison tools to serve job seekers no matter their primary language or background.

New Initiatives

Since the PY 21-24 Local Plan was published, the WIB has made investments in the English Language Learners Access to Careers and Employment (ELL-ACE) initiative, which provides on-the-job training, vocational training, and job placement in industrial jobs for individuals facing barriers to employment. ELL-ACE creates linkages between ELLs and businesses involved in advanced manufacturing, transportation, and logistics. This project seeks to place participants a quality job with self-sufficient wage of \$22.35/hr. An EDD Equity and Special Population grant funds supports this innovative project that aims to accelerate equity in employment for populations facing barriers. This project serves Dinuba residents and individuals in surrounding unincorporated communities of Northern Tulare County.

IV. WIOA TITLE I COORDINATION

The following narrative addresses services, activities, and administrative requirements of the Tulare County WIB under the WIOA Title I formula programs, along with strategies for staff preparation, training, and ongoing professional development to effectively respond to participant needs.

Staff Training and Professional Development to Increase Digital Technology Skills

Overall, we have found that WIB staff, those employed by CSET and other WIB contractors, and the majority of staff representing the local workforce system have a high level of competency with regard to digital skills and the use of technology that enables web-based meetings and all forms of distance learning. With the sudden and severe impact of the pandemic on workforce operations, the WIB was quick to adopt the use of virtual platforms for every aspect of service delivery and administration. In the first weeks of the worldwide health crisis, WIB management and AJCC supervisors recognized the need among some staff for training and support to increase their knowledge of and confidence in using various forms of virtual communication. To this end, in May 2020, the WIB contracted with Virginia Hamilton of Innovation Catalyst to provide training to frontline staff and partner representatives. The session covered critical topics including:

- Guidance on leading and developing virtual workshops;
- Planning virtual meetings to be customer-centered;
- Tools that can be used within virtual space to increase engagement; and
- Zoom “best practices;”

Over 80 frontline and management staff attended this training and, as a result, a “virtual workshop” group was formed to examine opportunities to develop and implement strategies to provide and enhance online sessions. WIB leadership anticipates that workforce services will continue to become increasingly “hybrid” in nature – part in-person and part online. Using the Employment Connection Committee as a platform for discussion, the WIB will continue to assess the needs of system staff at all levels for training in digital skills and technology.

As the biennial update to the plan was being developed, it was noted that additional digital skills training in which staff has participated includes:

- Conducting Productive Virtual Workshops
- Effective Communication for Virtual Trainings

Frontline Staff Training and Professional Development to Increase Cultural Competency and Effectiveness in Working with Individuals and Groups that Have Been Exposed to Trauma

Tulare County has a diverse population with many immigrants calling communities within the county home. As an extension of this diversity, the WIB has long considered cultural awareness to be an important part of staff development. With the intensive national focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion, organizations throughout the county, including the WIB and our providers, have expanded our views on how to ensure that issues of cultural competency are addressed. As a result, staff and system partners have participated in numerous training sessions touching on cultural competence and trauma-informed strategies since the PY 21-24 Local Plan was implemented, including, but not limited to the following:

Introduction to Cultural Intelligence

- Developing the Language of Cultural Intelligence
- Understanding Implicit Bias Through the Lens of Cultural Intelligence
- How to Create Sustainable Change
- Managing Conflict through the Lens of Equity
- Success for All Learners Through Equity

Various topics regarding Disability Awareness

- Windmills
- Deaf Culture and Community
- Disability Awareness and Etiquette

Trauma-Informed Approaches

- Stress Management
- Trauma Informed ACE
- Trauma Informed for Community Serving Professionals

A Professional Development Workgroup comprised of Employment Connection Committee members has been meeting throughout 2022 to identify professional development training for workforce system staff. A "Training Needs Assessment" was completed by staff in September 2022, which led to identification of numerous possible training topics. The team will organize quarterly training on priority topics, including customer service; communication; and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Coordination of Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities

Upon the rollout of the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN)

Act in 1988, Tulare County WIB began providing Rapid Response services to workers affected by layoffs covered under the legislation. Over the last three decades, the WIB, EDD, and local partners have continued to develop and refine Rapid Response services, reflecting guidance from U.S. DOL and the State of California and ever-evolving labor market needs. In recent years, layoff aversion activities have become an increasingly important part of the workforce system's strategies to minimize the effects of layoffs – actual or potential – on Tulare County workers.

Responding to Events of Worker Dislocation

Tulare County businesses experiencing events of worker dislocation defined in WARN must notify the Governor, and state officials, in turn, provide notification to the WIB. Following the WIB's notification, our Rapid Response team (which consists of a Rapid Response Coordinator and a Career Coach, along with a UI Specialist employed by EDD) convenes to prepare an event-specific strategy, and then meets with company officials and organized labor representatives (if applicable). One or more Rapid Response Orientation sessions are scheduled for affected workers. During the orientation, the Rapid Response team presents information about services and resources available to help laid-off workers, including information about eligibility for Unemployment Insurance, training and employment opportunities available at the Employment Connection Centers, temporary rental and mortgage assistance, health care insurance, and more. These sessions are typically conducted at sites where workers are employed but may be held at nearby facilities. Workers receive information kits, which include printed pamphlets and flyers which summarize the information presented during the orientation and explain the next steps, including how to contact an Employment Connection Career Coach. As a follow-up service to the initial orientations, the WIB hosts weekly Rapid Response webinars that serve to further elaborate on information originally presented to workers and as a forum for workers to pose questions to workforce system staff.

While COVID poses less of a threat than it did two years ago, the WIB will continue to conduct Rapid Response activities, including all meetings and orientations, both in-person and through web-based virtual conferencing platforms.

Efforts to Avert Worker Dislocation

The WIB uses tools and resources such as Econovue and Dunn and Bradstreet data to identify businesses with declining revenues and other risk factors. For these businesses, the primary mechanism through which the WIB conducts Layoff Aversion is robust business outreach and engagement activities. Members of the WIB's Business Services Team, as well as Business Resource Specialists stationed within the AJCCs, support this process by providing businesses with customized solutions to a variety of needs. Discussions with business leaders often initially focus on workforce hiring and training issues. However, during a "needs assessment" conducted by the Business Services Team, a wide range of other issues may be identified. For businesses in distress or for which specific concerns are identified, resources are presented, which may include: Workshare assistance through EDD; information on loans; Small Business Development

Center (SBDC) resources; and California Training Benefits. The WIB's website and postings on social media sites provide information about a variety of services available to businesses.

Central Valley Industry Engagement Roundtable Support for Rapid Response

Supporting regional and local efforts to serve business is the Central Valley Industry Engagement Roundtable (CVIER), which includes participation by all eight local boards in the Central Valley and Mother Lode WDB. Also participating are EDD and representatives from the California Labor Federation. The group meets quarterly to coordinate messaging and discuss Rapid Response and other strategies for the region. The group identified needs to increase staff knowledge about labor market information, Incumbent Worker Training, Rapid Response Services, and Sector Partnerships. Training on these topics has been provided to Tulare County workforce system staff and others throughout the Valley. As the CVIER stakeholders continue to meet, Tulare County WIB anticipates that additional strategies will be identified to support businesses, including improved approaches Rapid Response, recruitment assistance, and layoff aversion activities.

Services and Activities Available under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

Tulare County WIB's WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and services are employment-focused and targeted to industries in which there is significant demand for talent. While the WIB strives to continuously improve services, the local workforce system is highly effective in meeting the needs of business and job seekers. System strengths include, but are not limited to:

- A focus on and investment in areas of key sectors of the economy including advanced manufacturing, construction, energy, healthcare, transportation, logistics, and value-added agriculture.
- Strong local partnerships across which resources are leveraged to increase efficiencies and through which collaboration enables more effective service delivery.
- Regular strategic convenings of all system partners through quarterly meetings of the Employment Connection Committee.
- Service integration across various fund sources and programs, which features cross-trained staff, strategically integrated teams, and effective communication strategies.
- A commitment to innovation and improvement through efforts such as the development and implementation of an electronic referral and tracking process.

The information that follows further highlights system strengths and effectiveness.

Approach to Adult and Dislocated Worker Service Delivery

The WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker service delivery system is structured to provide quality career and training services for eligible individuals and to achieve performance goals set at the local level and negotiated with the state. Beyond these strategies, there are several unique characteristics of the Tulare County WIB's approach to service delivery that set its programs apart from other local workforce systems. Among these are:

- Integrated Service Delivery System/Teams
- Workforce Transformation
- Customer-Centered Design
- Focus on Priority Sectors and Jobs
- Use of Career-Specific Assessments

Integrated Service Delivery System/Teams: The AJCC has integrated partners' services within three major components: an integrated customer pool that ensures all customers are registered; integrated customer flow offering universal access to demand-driven, skills-based services; and an integrated staffing approach that provides services to customers as they are served through the integrated customer flow. Service Delivery Teams include:

A Welcome Team greets customers, which provides an individual or group overview of services, assists customers with self-registration on Employmentconnect.org, and offers customers the opportunity to register for WIOA services. When customers seek more than minimal assistance from staff, they must be registered, and eligibility must be determined. The Welcome Team determines WIOA Adult Priority of Service and/or Dislocated Worker eligibility through the EmploymentConnection.org system. Upon completion of this process, the staff hands customers over to the Skills and Talent Team for individualized career services.

The Skills & Talent Team makes WIOA basic career services available for all job seekers and provides individualized career services for individuals determined to be in need of and suitable for such services to obtain or retain employment in a career pathway. Through an objective assessment process, a career coach and the job seeker jointly develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). The plan identifies employment goals, a career pathway, achievement objectives, and an appropriate combination of services for the participant to obtain these goals and objectives. IEPs are one of the most effective ways to serve individuals with barriers to employment.

The Employment Solutions Team (EST) serves as a platform for open communication and collaboration among the WIB, AJCC staff, and other industry engagement professionals in the local workforce development system. Through this regular convening, the EST shapes the coordination of a shared business outreach strategy; shares updates about site-specific strategies to assist businesses with their workforce needs; and

identifies common challenges and opportunities for improvement through professional development.

Workforce Transformation: In early 2021, with funding and support from the Irvine Foundation, a group of workforce research and practitioner partners set out to explore the degree to which human-centered design principles were present in local workforce development boards across California and the country. The result was the Workforce Transformation Corps. As a grantee under this initiative, Tulare County WIB hosts a “workforce transformation fellow” to advance the Corps’ objectives: implementation of human-centered design tools and principles that move toward customer and community-centered strategies to help solve deep structural barriers facing the public workforce system. The fellow will work to develop customer journey maps that will identify bottlenecks in current customer flow and enable our current practices to deliver services in a way that benefit our customers.

Customer-Centered Design: The WIB, the AJCC career services providers, and system partners have embraced a customer-centered approach to designing and developing services. The WIB formed three local design teams with twenty-one representatives from partner agencies, local businesses, and six WIB staff to participate in a seven-week Human-Centered Design (HCD) program to assess and design workforce services focused on a distinct customer: business; unemployed adults; and youth. The HCD teams assessed needs through one-on-one interviews with customers, emersion, and surveys to develop and prototype services for each customer group.

Priority Sectors and Quality Jobs: One-page labor market profiles have been created for the region’s priority sectors. Training has been provided to demonstrate how to use the data presented within the profiles. Following this initial overview, monthly training will be provided to examine the labor market for each of the priority sectors. In addition, frontline staff will continue to participate in Sector Summits, conducted quarterly by the Tulare Kings College and Career Collaborative. These summits feature on-site business externships; sector-specific updates about the labor market; and dialogue to encourage collaboration between workforce and education partners.

Since the implementation of the current Local Plan, the WIB has begun tracking requests for labor market information. The WIB provides data to community partners and helps to keep them informed about the local labor market. Staff provide custom reports to industry, the community colleges, economic development, K-12, adult education, and Employment Connection representatives. Staff collects data on requests to understand who they are serving, and the type of data being requested. This information is used to understand how they should focus training and presentations.

Career-Specific Skills Assessment: All WIOA customers seeking training are assessed with WorkKeys, a tool produced by ACT, the company that produces the ACT college entrance exam. The WorkKeys assessment is designed to gauge an individual’s level of “workplace employability skills” in three areas: Applied Mathematics; Locating Information, and Reading for Information. Upon completion of the assessment, participants earn a National Work Readiness Certificate, which identifies their skill level

in the core subject areas.

Career Services

The delivery of career services at Tulare County WIB's Employment Connection centers (the AJCCs) begins with a greeting and an introduction to services. AJCC staff next determines WIOA eligibility, conducts an objective assessment, and develops an action plan, which will address job readiness, supportive services, and job search assistance. Customers may participate exclusively in basic career services or may need additional assistance and be enrolled in individualized career services.

Basic career services must be made available to all individuals seeking services from the one-stop delivery system, and include:

- Determinations of eligibility;
- Outreach, intake, and orientation;
- Initial assessment;
- Labor exchange services;
- Referrals;
- Workforce and labor market employment information;
- Performance information and program cost information;
- Local area performance accountability measures;
- Availability of supportive services or assistance;
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA; and
- Information and assistance regarding filing claims under UI programs.

Individualized career services are provided when they are needed for a participant to obtain or retain employment. One-stop center staff relies principally on assessments to determine the need for and appropriateness of individualized career services. These services include:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments;
- Development of an individual employment plan;
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring;
- Career planning (e.g., case management);
- Short-term pre-vocational services;
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; and
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

Training Services

The Tulare County WIB makes a wide variety of training available to help job seekers prepare for jobs and careers in key sectors. Training modalities and services include:

Off-the-Shelf Training Using Individual Training Accounts: During the initial assessment, AJCC staff provides participants with an orientation to all WIOA services, including occupational skills training available through providers and programs listed on the Eligible Training Providers List. In consultation with AJCC staff, individuals receive information regarding approved programs, program quality, and training provider performance information. Participants conduct school visits to obtain more information such as class start dates, course curriculum, and other information about programs. The WIB gives priority to training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials and are in-demand occupations in the WIB's targeted industry sectors. Programs/courses are purchased through an individual training account (ITAs) established for the participant.

On-the-Job-Training (OJT) is a work-based learning model that provides training in an employment setting. Businesses may be reimbursed up to 75 percent of the participant's wages to cover training costs. Job-specific training plans are developed to provide structure and specify skills development outcomes.

Essential Skills Training: In partnership with the Visalia Economic Development Corporation, the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County (WIB) surveyed businesses in the Visalia Industrial Park. Findings indicated an applied skills gap in the areas of problem-solving, oral communication, written communication, teamwork, reliability, social responsibility, organization, and leadership (attributes commonly identified as soft skills). As a result, many businesses struggle with retaining entry-level employees and the recruitment/identification of middle-skilled staff who demonstrate the essential skills for the workplace. Furthermore, input from the WIB Industrial Advisory Committee and the Health Care Advisory Committee indicates an increased need for essential workplace skills, first-line supervisor skills, and technical skills training for entry-level employees. Employers report negative trends in employee retention and mid-level human resource availability, citing skills deficiencies as the leading cause. Low retention rates and the absence of mid-level workers reduce productivity, increase the likelihood of workplace injuries, and increase human resource costs. Essential skills training that has been developed and implemented by the WIB covers teambuilding, communicating effectively, internal customer service, workplace attitude, resolving conflict, stress management, time management, and values and ethics.

Transitional Jobs: This activity provides participants with work experience that takes place within the context of an employee-employer relationship, in which the program provider generally acts as the employer and provides an opportunity for the participant to develop important workplace skills.

Incumbent Worker Training: The WIB has designated the manufacturing, logistics and transportation, and healthcare industries as priority sectors for incumbent worker training and has worked with local training providers to offer multi-employer site training programs that are customized to meet the needs of companies in these sectors.

Priority of Service

The AJCCs prioritize services for Adult Program participants that meet criteria in the following categories.

Public Assistance Recipients and Other Low-Income Individuals: The WIB published local directive WIB TUL 16-01, which provides guidance on the priority of service for recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals. To be considered low-income, an individual must meet one of the following criteria:

- Receives, or in the past six months has received or is a member of a family that is receiving, or in the past six months has received, assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, supplemental security income program, or state or local income-based public assistance;
- Is in a family with total family income that does not exceed the higher of the following: beneath the Poverty line or 70 percent of the Lower Living Standard Income Level;
- Is homeless; or
- Is an individual with a disability whose own income does not exceed the income requirement but is a member of a family whose total income does exceed the maximum.

Tulare County HHSA, along with other public agencies and community-based providers assists the AJCCs in recruiting individuals from this priority group.

Individuals Who Are Basic Skills Deficient: Priority for individuals in this category is established at the time of eligibility determination and does not change during participation. Basic skills deficiency criteria include:

- Lacks HS Diploma or equivalency and is not enrolled in postsecondary education;
- Enrolled in Title II Adult Education/Literacy program;
- English, reading, writing, or computing skills at an 8.9 or below grade level;
- Determined to be limited English skills proficient through staff-documented observations; or
- A standardized test may be used to assess basic skills that include reading, writing, or computing skills.

Information regarding eligibility is documented in the participant's file and may take the form of school records; a referral from a WIOA Title II basic adult education; or ELL program; academic assessment results; case notes; or self-attestation.

Individualized career services and training services are each subject to the WIB's priority of service provisions.

Tulare County offers a comprehensive year-round WIOA youth workforce development program for both in-school and out-of-school youth ages 16-24. Youth programs are delivered by competitively procured providers (listed below) with experience in providing workforce development services to both in-school and out-of-school youth. Youth programs are co-located in both comprehensive AJCCs (Porterville and Visalia), and the following sites across the county.

- Area I – Porterville and surrounding areas (TCOE – SEE)
- Area II – Tulare and surrounding areas (CSET)
- Area III – Visalia and surrounding areas (CSET)
- Area IV – Cutler-Orosi/Dinuba and surrounding areas (CSET)
- Area V – Farmersville/Exeter and surrounding areas (Proteus, Inc.)

Tulare County WIOA Youth Services

Services focus on helping youth align their interests and skills with education, training, and employment. All participants receive individualized, comprehensive, and integrated services that provide the opportunities, preparation, and support necessary to transition to a successful and sustainable career path. Youth Priorities, include the following:

For those participants who do not have a high school diploma

- To earn a high school diploma or equivalency credential during or post-participation.
- Obtain subsidized employment or unsubsidized employment in a career path with sustainable wages.

For those participants who have received a high school diploma

- To enroll in a postsecondary education program; or
- Enroll in an occupational training program in an in-demand industry sector; or
- Obtain subsidized or unsubsidized employment in a career path with sustainable wages.

To serve in-school youth, the WIB partners with school districts to develop specialized projects for their students. These projects focus on opportunities to bridge education, training and employment. This approach strengthens communication and coordination of services to better serve the students most in need of workforce development services, skills attainment, and coordination of supportive services. Students are identified and referred to the WIOA youth program by their school site work-based learning coordinator or school counselors. Target populations include students with disabilities, justice-involved youth, foster youth, homeless or runaway youth, and those who are English language learners.

WIOA prescribes 14 youth elements or service categories that must be available in all Youth programs. The actual services provided to a participant are based on the results of individual assessments. The WIB ensures that youth can access all WIOA-required services, including the following, which are those that typically reflect areas of greatest

need among local youth.

Orientation: WIOA Orientations expose youth to all features and benefits of the program.

Eligibility Determination: WIOA youth eligibility documentation includes in-school, out-of-school status, ages 16-24, authorization to work, residency, selective service, barriers, family size, and income verification.

Objective Assessment: All participants enrolled in the WIOA youth program receive an objective assessment, which establish baselines for all activities and training. It will act as the foundation for developing goals (i.e., educational, employment, credential attainment, etc.). CASAS is used to determine grade equivalent reading and math levels, which may include a basic skills deficiency that will be addressed by the program. Other instruments used to assess youth include Mynextmove and O*Net.

Individual Service Strategy (ISS): This customized service planning document is based on the objective assessment results. The ISS is written plan of action that identifies age-appropriate short and long-term goals, including career pathways, education goals, and service needs.

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling: Each youth receives one-on-one support from a career coach and may be referred for additional specialized services such as personal, family, or substance use-related counseling. Some youth may receive individual or group mentoring support.

Work Readiness Skills Training: Youth participate in workshops and one-on-one activities to improve their knowledge and abilities in interviewing skills, resume building, job search, conflict resolution, and team building, and receive guidance on completing financial aid and college applications.

Basic Skills Training: Participants assessed as deficient in basic literacy skills or lacking a high school diploma or equivalency will be offer services through referral to the local education system, which provides options for basic literacy skills training and dropout recovery and offers academic training and access to occupational skills training.

Work Experience: Most youth participate in work experience, which is a structured learning activity that takes place in a workplace and provides youth with opportunities for career exploration and skills development.

Occupational Skills Training: Job-specific training in-demand occupations is available to youth ages 18-24. Youth may participate in training-specific assessment to determine their suitability for various program.

Activities to Support Educational Attainment: Youth have access to a wide range of training to improve basic skills, advance toward school completion, or prepare for post-

secondary transition, such as enrollment in college, advanced training, or other vocational programs, including apprenticeships.

Financial Literacy Education: Youth are provided financial literacy education and are guided on how to create a personal and household budget, to make an informed financial decision about education, retirement, homeownership, and credit scores.

Labor Market and Employment Information: WIOA Youth Program staff educate youth on in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area.

Supportive Services: Supportive services are provided to overcome barriers that hinder the successful participation in WIOA funded activities. Supportive services may include transportation, work attire, and more.

Activities to Prepare for and Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training: WIOA youth participants interested in advanced education are provided with college exploration and guidance, career assessment, financial aid, and labor market information.

Follow-up Services: WIOA Youth Program staff provide a minimum of 12 months of follow-up services for participants, which may include assisting youth with securing and retaining employment, continuing training, or attaining secondary or postsecondary credential/diploma.

Serving Youth with Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities participate in a comprehensive assessment to identify their skills, interests, barriers, and goals. Based on the results of their assessment, these participants receive services corresponding to their individual needs. Depending on the participant, services may include activities leading to competitive integrated employment opportunities.

The Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS) is a specialized program in which the WIB and DOR share consumers. The program serves students with disabilities with job readiness training and work experience in a career pathway matching their interests and career goals.

Strategies to Promote Digital Literacy

Whether youth services are provided at a comprehensive AJCC, a satellite center, or a community-based site, participants have access to technology in resource rooms, large and small. The overwhelming majority of youth participants demonstrate high levels of digital literacy, as they were born into a world where personal computers, personal devices, and the Internet are part of daily life. While the WIB has served many youth participants who have not had their own hardware, exposure in school and through other activities has resulted in their development of strong digital skills. Even when encountering new technology, young people tend to approach such situations with far

less apprehension than their older counterparts, such as baby boomers. When youth participants do need support to increase their digital literacy skills, workshops, tutorials, and on-line training are available.

To address challenges brought about by COVID-19, Tulare County WIB increased the availability of technology-related support services for youth, including purchasing such items as Chromebooks and hot spots. Youth have received the vast majority of their services during the pandemic via virtual platforms, thereby increasing their familiarity with and skills in using these services.

Expanding on a Successful Approach

While the WIB's model has proven successful, both in terms of interest from local youth and the outcomes they achieve, operating WIOA programs (including programs serving youth) following the outbreak of the coronavirus provided a challenging, but unique environment for working and learning. Based on the success of our efforts in transforming traditional service models to new online formats (and the largely positive reactions we have received from many youth participants to these services), the WIB expects that, in the future, our approach to service delivery will be fully "hybrid," offering a combination of in-person and online services to meet the needs, preferences, and learning styles of various youth.

Entity Responsible for Disbursal of Grant Funds and the Competitive Process Used to Award Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities

The Tulare County WIB is responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. The WIB has been delegated the authority to disburse WIOA grant funds by agreement with the Tulare County Board of Supervisors (TCBOS). This authority is documented in an Administrative Services Agreement between the WIB and TCBOS dated August 22, 2017.

The WIB uses a competitive procurement process to award grants and contracts for activities carried out under this plan. This process follows all applicable federal, state, and local guidelines for such procurement. Procurement of WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs takes place every four years. During the 4 years covered by this plan, procurement will result in the award of contracts for all Title I programs.

All procurement transactions by the WIB and its subrecipients are conducted in a manner providing full and open competition consistent with standards of the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR part 200. To the extent possible, bidders/proposers or offerors must have an equal chance to secure a contract. The requirements specified in the procurement must bear a relationship to the need being procured. The process for a competitive procurement includes the following:

- A Request for Proposal/Quote (RFP/RFQ) is prepared that includes response timelines, ensuring sufficient time for all phases of the procurement process to be carried out.

- Proposal evaluation procedures are established.
- Public notification of the procurement is issued through an announcement in a local public medium (e.g., newspaper) or media that, at a minimum, cover the entire service area. A copy of the RFP/RFQ is provided to any party requesting it. Notification is made through the dissemination of the RFP/RFQ to entities included on the current, applicable proposal list. A record (e.g., log) is made of all inquiries received regarding the procurement and the submission requirements. All inquiries are responded to in writing, except those, which are answered in the solicitation. Copies of all inquiries and written responses are distributed on a timely basis to all parties to whom the solicitation has been distributed. Clarification updates are issued weekly to ensure that timely and accurate information is distributed to all potential bidders.
- A proposers' conference is held after the distribution of the RFP. When such a conference is held, all parties to which the solicitations have been distributed are notified of the date, time, and place of the conference. This notification is included in the RFP itself. Each question answered at the conference is documented in writing and this information is provided as an addendum to the solicitation package to any subsequent requesters of the RFP.
- The date and time proposals are received are noted to ensure that only proposals received by the due date and time qualify for the evaluation process.
- Competitive negotiation requires that at least two responsive proposals for the same scope of work and service area are received in response to the RFP. If only one responsive proposal is received, then there has been a failed competition and the WIB has the option to re-compete the procurement or proceed. The WIB's definition of a failed competition and its rights and options in the event of such a failure are included in the RFP.

How the Local Board Fulfills the Duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider or Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers

Tulare County WIB has implemented approaches to fulfilling the WIOA-mandated Operator and Career Services Provider roles that produce strong results for the local workforce development delivery system.

AJCC/One-Stop Operator

The WIB has secured approval from the state to serve the AJCC/One-Stop Operator (OSO) for the workforce system in Tulare County. As the OSO, the WIB provides coordination of services as prescribed by WIOA and its implementing regulations for the local network of AJCCs, including two comprehensive centers; one in Visalia and the other in Porterville.

The WIB has identified a number of advantages to acting in the role of OSO. First, it eliminates duplication of effort, as the WIB already provides much of the coordination of the AJCC system that is required of the OSO. In addition, the WIB's longstanding role in the community has resulted in many strong and effective relationships with required

partners and other stakeholders. The WIB had led the development and implementation of customer-focused services for employers and job seekers. This approach to the AJCCs' delivery of services enables the system to address participants' individual needs and circumstances, which often call for the deployment of services from multiple partners.

In the role of OSO, the WIB strives to continuously evaluate and improve services and to realize efficiencies that make services more accessible and that achieve greater results. As OSO, the WIB continues to embrace the following guiding WIOA Principles:

- Streamlining services through AJCC service delivery systems;
- Empowering individuals through information and access to training service;
- Providing universal access to employment-related services; and
- Increasing accountability (i.e., improving customers' employment retention and earnings, improving the quality of the workforce, sustaining economic growth, enhancing productivity, and reducing welfare dependency).

Career Services Provider

The WIB competitively procures and contracts out the duties and responsibilities of the career service provider. The board contracts with Community Services & Employment Training (CSET) to deliver career services in Visalia, Porterville, and Tulare centers, and Proteus, Inc. is contracted to deliver career services in Dinuba. Their role as career services providers is described under Section IV.D of this plan.

V. CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROGRAM YEARS 2021 - 24

Based on discussions held throughout the process of developing the original PY 21-24 Local Plan, the following topics were identified as priorities for further exploration, development, and/or enhancement for the WIB and the partners.

Major themes identified by the WIB and stakeholders include:

1. Continue to identify the skills businesses need most, recognizing that the economic landscape may significantly change and evolve over the next four years and beyond.
2. When business needs are identified, move rapidly to transform them into training and services that respond to these needs, leveraging resources from industry, economic development, the workforce system, and, especially, local education partners.
3. Focus on foundational skills such as communication and mathematics, digital literacy, financial literacy, and workplace behaviors and attitudes.
4. Expand the system's reach, making services available for all job seekers. These efforts should include strategies to increase the physical presence of stakeholders at sites through the county and the greater use of online platforms to provide information and deliver services.
5. Connecting to other initiatives in the County, address the "digital divide," which limits the access that low-income individuals and communities have to technology and web-based information and services.
6. Be intentional about the WIB's strategies to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion and communicate the WIB's plans on these issues.

Other workforce strategies and issues that stakeholders have suggested the WIB and partners examine and evaluate include the following:

7. Develop strategies for a hybrid service delivery model, which marries newly implemented online and virtual strategies to traditional in-person service delivery.
8. Identify strategies and services that may need to be developed or enhanced to meet the evolving needs of business and job seekers in the wake of COVID.
9. Develop new partnerships and expand existing ones to connect to customer groups that are currently underserved.
10. Assess the extent to which the WIB has achieved brand recognition among key customers in the county and consider options to improve the level of recognition.

11. Beyond websites and social media postings, more fully harness the power of the web to identify and attract new customers.
12. Identify system challenges that could be improved by and otherwise benefit from an intensive application of human-centered design approaches that the WIB and system partners have previously used to achieve improvements.

In developing the 2023 Modification to the PY 21-24 Local Plan, Tulare County WIB engaged workforce system stakeholders and community members in discussions about the workforce system. Recommendations arising from these discussions include:

- Develop strategies and materials to inform businesses about the changing workforce and to support their ability to successful recruit talent.
- Expand the workforce by preparing more individuals from under-resourced groups (e.g., ELLs, justice-involved individuals, people with disabilities, older workers) for in-demand jobs.
- Develop training in “social literacy” to promote the success of workers in the workplace and in all aspects of their lives.

VI.

APPENDICES

The following items are included as part of the Local Plan.

Attachment 1: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Attachment 2: Public Comments Received that Disagree with the Local Plan

Attachment 3: Signature Page

Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

To facilitate the engagement of stakeholders in planning for the local workforce development delivery system and in the development of the original PY 2021-24 Local Plan, the WIB hosted a series of three community and stakeholder forums focused on topics affecting strategies and services across the system.

These forums included:

Vision for the Local Workforce System: How can workforce system partners and other stakeholders create a system that is more equitable, accessible, and effective?

This forum was held via Zoom on November 24, 2020.

Strengthening the Role of the AJCC as an Access Point for all System Partners and Programs: How can the AJCC be more effectively promoted and used as a central access point for all local workforce system services?

This forum was held via Zoom on December 16, 2020.

Improving Workforce System Services: How can workforce system services be made more effective and relevant for all customers, including vulnerable populations that have been underserved by traditional programs?

This forum was held via Zoom on December 8, 2020.

In addition, a planning discussion centered on “vision” was held with the members of the Workforce Development Board during their meeting on November 18, 2020.

Where necessary, agency-to-agency discussions were held with various partners and stakeholders to enhance collaboration between their programs and those of the WIB.

Such discussions were conducted via Zoom and included meetings with:

- EDD on November 9, 2020, regarding the Wagner-Peyser and UI programs.
- Proteus, Inc., and CSET on January 6, 2021, regarding the WIOA Section 167 MSFW Program.
- Tulare County Health & Human Service Agency on November 30, 2020, regarding CalFresh Employment & Training program.
- Department of Rehabilitation on November 24, 2020, regarding vocational rehabilitation programs.
- Tule River Indian Tribe of California on December 15, 2020, regarding the WIOA 166 Indian and Native American Programs.

- Tulare County Department of Child Support Services on December 9, 2020, regarding child support services.

As the 2023 Biennial Modification to the PY 21-24 Local Plan was being developed, the WIB continued to engage with the community and stakeholders about system priorities and Plan content. This included:

- A Community and Stakeholder Forum on the *Role of the Workforce System in our Dynamic and Uncertain Economy*. The in-person forum was held on November 9, 2022
- A November 21, 2022 Zoom meeting with HHSA leadership and CSET representatives regarding collaboration on the CalFresh Employment and Training program.
- A December 14, 2022 Zoom meeting to discuss collaboration with DCSS leadership and representatives of the Tulare County Family Court.

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Email, Social Media, Website	EDD	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Department of Rehabilitation	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Business – Family HealthCare Network	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Business /Economic Development – Bank of the Sierra	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Business – Ken’s Stakes & Supplies	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Business – Warren & Baerg Manufacturing, Inc.	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Business – Tulare County Farm Bureau	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Labor – International Association of	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
	Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers		
Email, Social Media, Website	Education – Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified School District	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Education – College of the Sequoias	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Local Government – Board of Supervisors	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Community Services Employment Training – NextStep	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Community Services Employment Training – Sequoias Community Corps	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Community Services Employment Training – CalFresh E&T	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Community Services Employment Training – Title I Youth Program	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Tulare Adult School	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Proteus, Inc. – WIOA Section 167 Program	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Proteus, Inc. – Education Division	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Email, Social Media, Website	Hispanic Chamber Foundation Tulare & Kings	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Sequoias Adult Education Consortium	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Visalia Adult School	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Employment Connection – Justice-Involved Programs	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Employment Connection – Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker Program	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Employment Connection – ACE/DEA	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Employment Connection – English Language Learners	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Family Services of Tulare County	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Department of Child Support Services	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Health & Human Service Agency TulareWORKS	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Health & Human Service Agency CalFresh E&T Programs	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC)	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	WestCare	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Email, Social Media, Website	Tulare County Probation	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Social Media	Community Members	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Tulare County Office of Education	-Attended forums.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website, Phone Call	Tule River Indian Tribe of California	-Participated in 1-to-1 discussion with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County	-Attended forums. -Participated in 1-to-1 discussions with WDB	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Tulare County Economic Development Corporation	-Attended a forum.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Congressman Valadao	-Attended a forum.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email, Social Media, Website	Central Valley Recovery Services	-Attended a forum.	Engaged in the planning process.
Email	Tulare County Superior Court	-Participated in stakeholder discussion.	Engaged in the planning process

Attachment 2

PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED THAT DISAGREE WITH THE LOCAL PLAN

- *No comments were received during the 30-day public comment period.*

SIGNATURE PAGE

The following signatures represent approval of the Local Plan by the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County and the Chief Elected Official for Tulare County Local Workforce Area

For the **Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County**

Kerry Hydash, Chair	Date

For the **Tulare County Board of Supervisors**

Amy Shuklian, Local Chief Elected Official	Date